

Sutherland Reservoir

2009 Fall Survey Summary



Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

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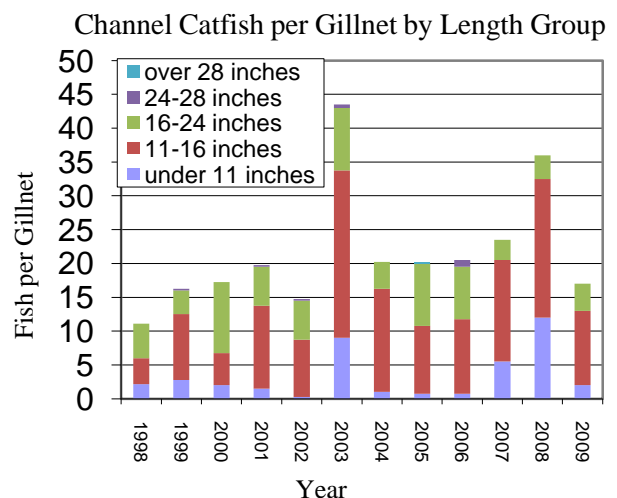
The following text and graphs are the result of netting surveys completed during the fall of 2009 at Sutherland Reservoir. For comparative purposes, results from previous years are also shown. Fish populations are sampled each fall at Sutherland using gill nets, a method commonly used to sample fish found primarily in open water, such as walleye and white bass. These nets are set on approximately the same date and location each year to reduce variability and allow for trend comparisons of species abundance and size distributions.

Channel catfish, white bass and walleye should provide good angling opportunities again in 2010 at Sutherland. Catfish anglers have great success using night crawlers, shad, livers, blood baits, and commercially prepared baits. Sutherland reservoir has provided an early spring walleye bite for the last six years. Angling opportunities for white bass should be excellent. Most anglers target white bass during the summer and into fall when they are schooling and can be easily located and caught on the surface. Wiper fishing will probably be slow due to declining numbers but there are still some available.

Channel catfish catch rates in 2009 were slightly lower than the previous five years and the majority of sampled channel catfish were 11-16 inches long. Walleye catch rates were up and a large proportion of fish sampled were longer than 15 inches. White bass catch rates were relatively high at 30 fish per net. Wipers were sampled in low numbers.

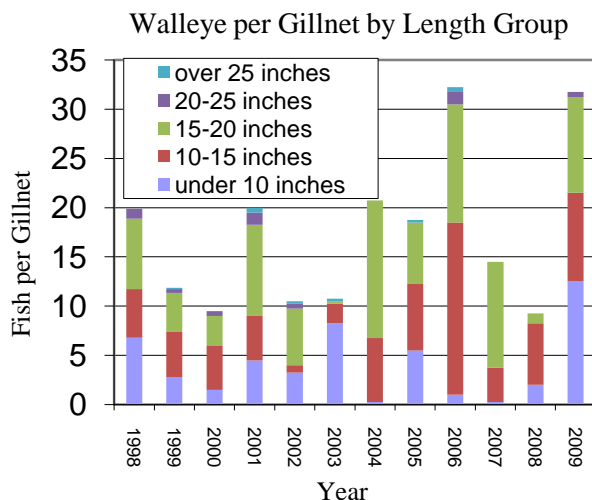
Channel Catfish

Catch rate for channel catfish was lower in 2009 with an average of 17 fish per net. Most of the fish caught were shorter than 16 inches and the overall average length was 14.6 inches. These fish between 11 and 16 inches are good eating-size fish and there is the possibility for larger fish. Catfish are not stocked regularly at Sutherland.



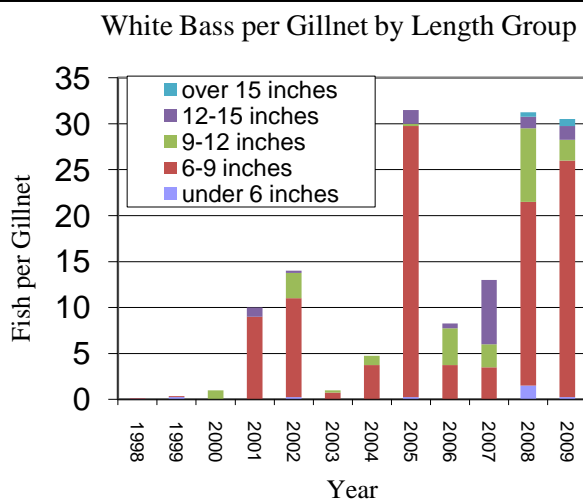
Walleye

Walleye catch rates have fluctuated over the years. Catch rates were high in 2006 and again in 2009. Approximately 32 fish per net were sampled in 2009 and size distribution was equally distributed among size groups. Walleye are stocked annually in Sutherland, and approximately 40,000 walleye fingerlings will be stocked in 2010.



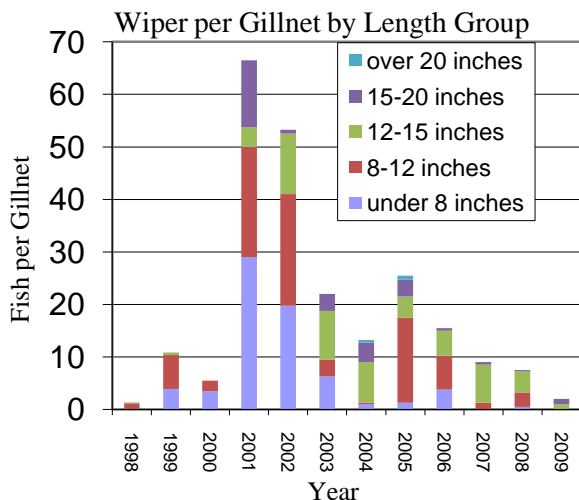
White Bass

The white bass catch rate was similar to that seen in 2008, with 30+ fish caught per net. The number of 9-12-inch white bass was considerably lower in 2009 while a large abundance of 6-9 inch fish was sampled in 2009. White bass populations can be cyclical and 2009 was definitely an "up" year. Most of the fish caught were small but should be available for harvest in 2010 and for several years to come. White bass are not regularly stocked in Sutherland Reservoir.



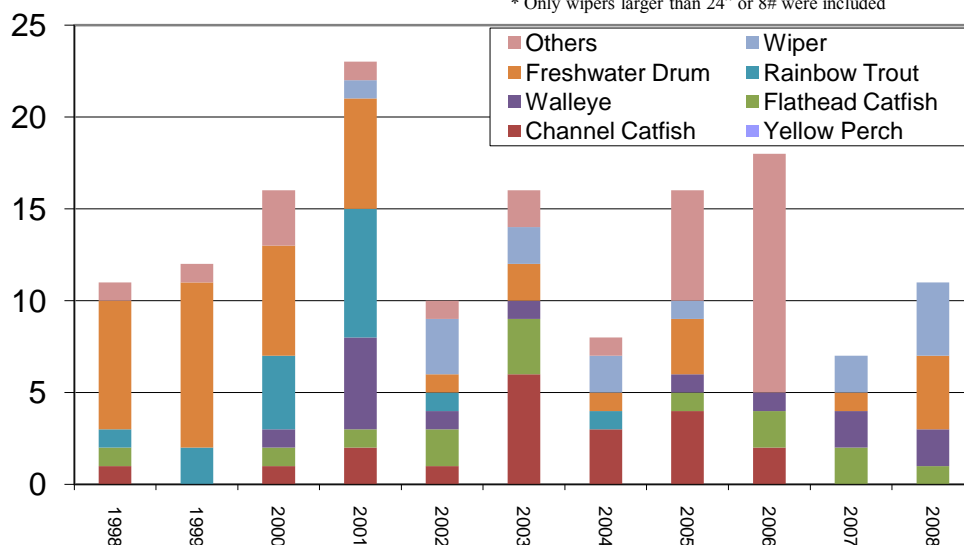
Wipers

The wiper catch in 2009 was the lowest seen since 1998 with an average of two fish per net. These fish averaged 15.25 inches in length. Wipers are stocked annually and approximately 24,000 will be stocked in 2010. Fortunately, white bass numbers are outstanding so there should be plenty of summer temperate bass action available.



Master Angler Awards, Sutherland Reservoir 1998-2008 (2009 data not yet available)

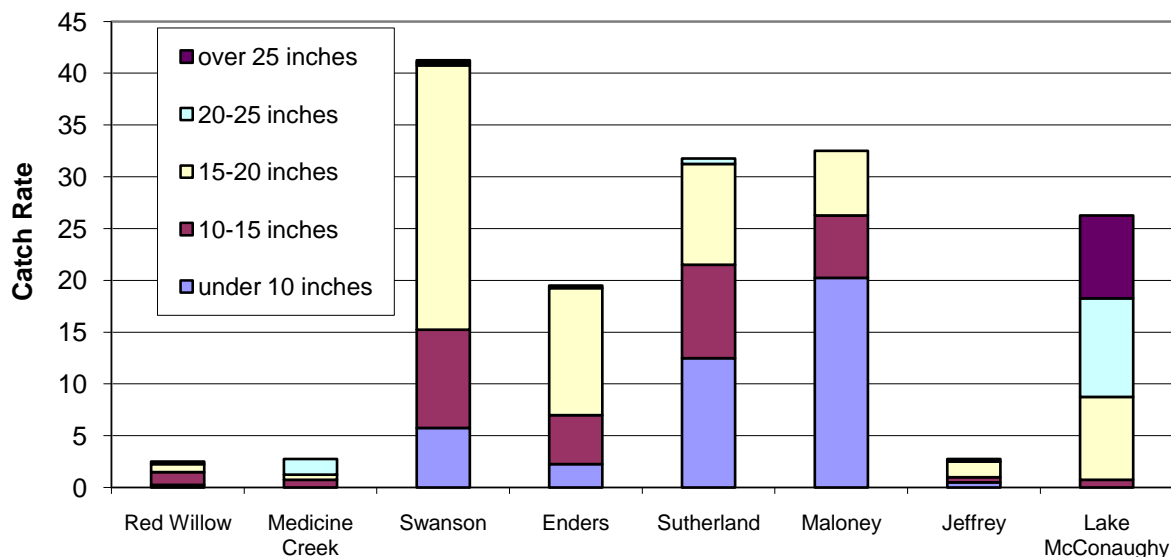
* Only wipers larger than 24" or 8# were included



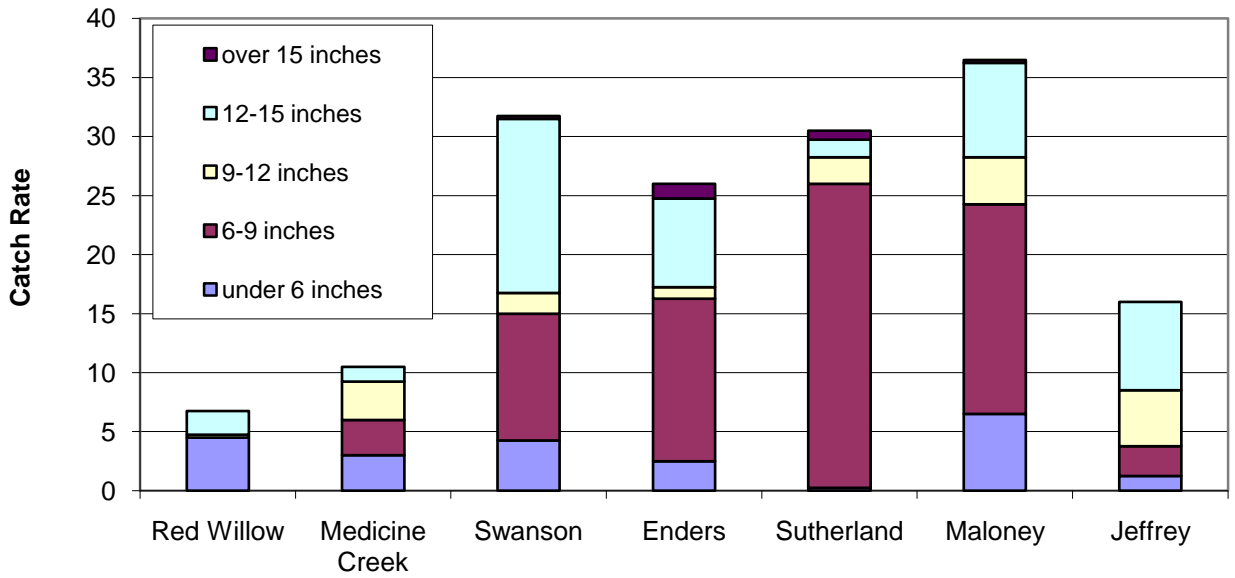
The number of Master Angler Awards (MA) in 2008 were higher compared to 2007. There were a total of 11 fish reported. Although all fish that qualify for MA status are not reported, MA awards are useful in tracking the number of trophy size fish over time. There were 4 wipers, 1 flathead catfish, 2 walleye and 4 freshwater drum reported in 2008.

The following graphs compare 2009 walleye, white bass, wiper and channel catfish gill net catch rates between Southwest District reservoirs.

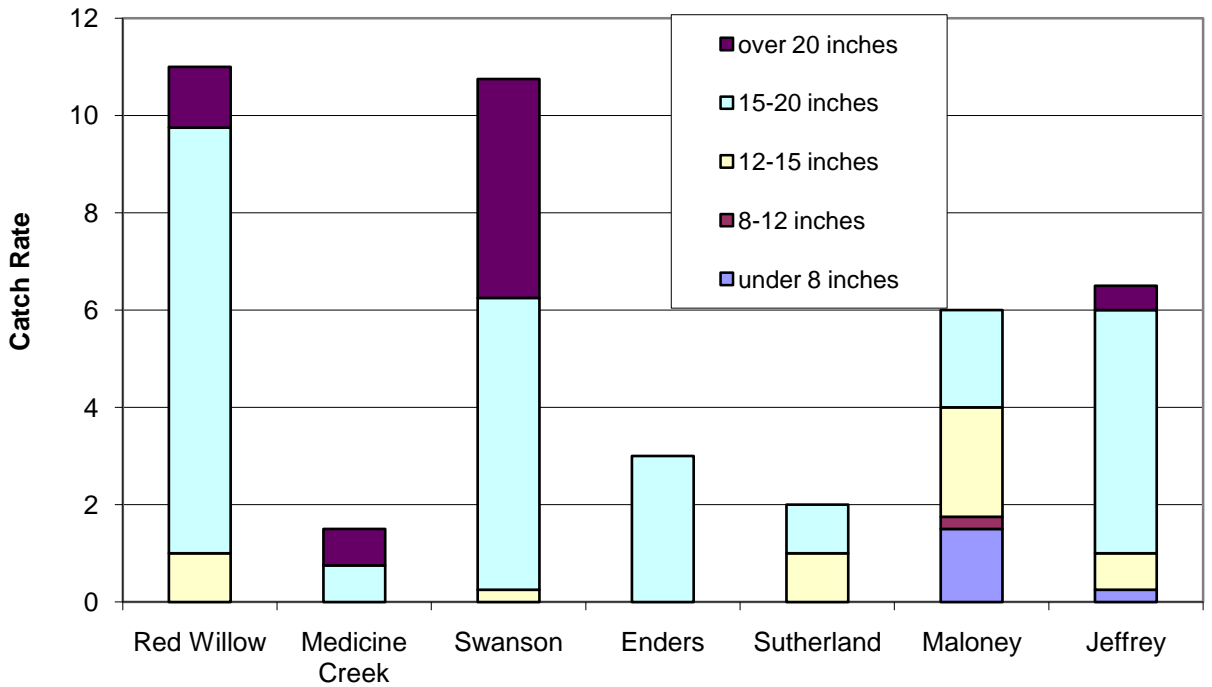
Walleye



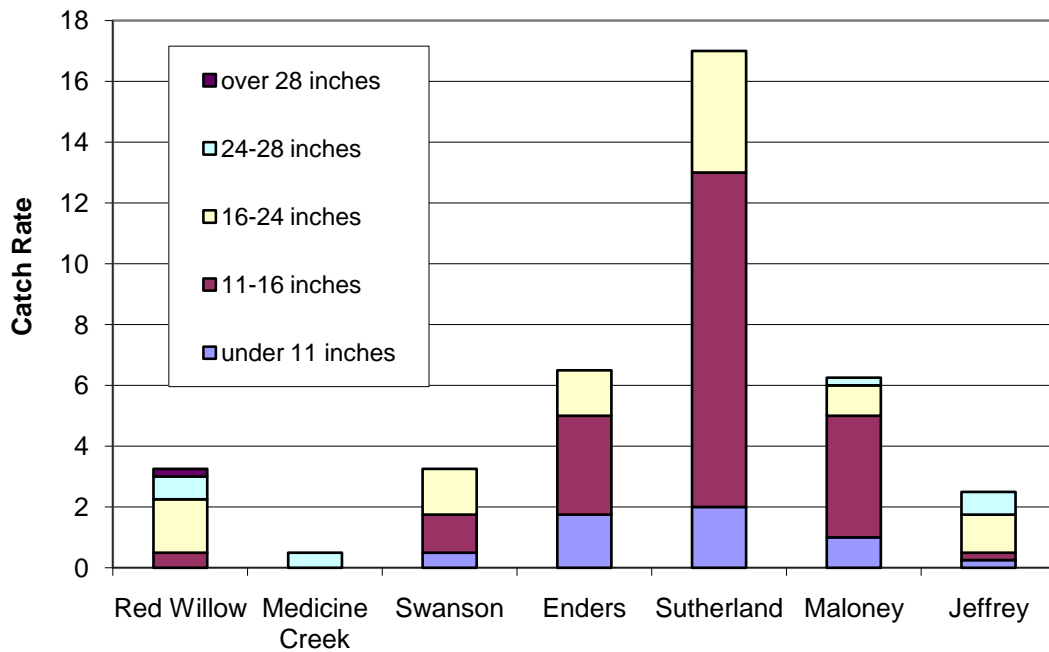
White Bass



Wiper



Channel catfish



For additional information on fisheries management at Enders Reservoir contact:
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